



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in May to 4.0 percent from April's rate of 3.6 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In May 2003, the rate was 5.3 percent. May's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* decreased slightly by 180 jobs from April 2004, but a more significant decrease of 1,120 occurred from May 2003. Almost all industries are lagging behind last year's job levels.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Clearwater County

- Seismic Tech of Orofino has sent its first product shipment of more than 1,000 valves to California. The valves, used in natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes or hurricanes, will shut down gas or propane lines. The company, which employs 12, is operating out of a temporary location in downtown Orofino. "We're full speed ahead and maxed out to what we can do in this location," said Doug Donner, general manager of Seismic Tech. Seismic Tech and ASE, a sign company, are playing a big role in economic recovery for Clearwater County. ASE, which employs about 40 workers, was the first tenant of a 30,000-square-foot building at the Orofino Business Center, which was constructed with a combination of state, federal, and local money. Seismic Tech will follow as soon as some defects in the building can be repaired. Seismic Tech is employing local people from a broad variety of backgrounds and putting them through an average of about six weeks of intense, technical training. Within a year, Seismic Tech could employ between 80 and 100 people,

Idaho & Lewis Counties

- The Elk City business incubator project has been given a tentative

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	May 2004*	Apr 2004	May 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,140	35,500	36,300	-1.0	-3.2
Unemployment	1,410	1,280	1,910	10.2	-26.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0	3.6	5.3		
Total Employment	33,730	34,280	34,710	-1.6	-2.8
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,120	35,580	36,530	-1.3	-3.9
Unemployment	1,250	1,300	1,690	-3.8	-26.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	3.7	4.6		
Total Employment	33,870	34,280	34,840	-1.2	-2.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	25,750	25,930	26,870	-0.7	-4.2
Goods-Producing Industries	4,400	4,420	4,580	-0.5	-3.9
Natural Resources & Mining	200	210	200	-4.8	0.0
Construction	1,030	1,060	1,220	-2.8	-15.6
Manufacturing	3,170	3,150	3,160	0.6	0.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	550	550	550	0.0	0.0
Food Manufacturing	60	50	100	20.0	-40.0
Paper Manufacturing	1,220	1,200	1,180	1.7	3.4
Other Manufacturing	1,340	1,350	1,330	-0.7	0.8
Service-Providing Industries	21,350	21,510	22,290	-0.7	-4.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,420	5,270	5,510	2.8	-1.6
Wholesale Trade	590	600	640	-1.7	-7.8
Retail Trade	3,570	3,450	3,600	3.5	-0.8
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,170	1,130	1,180	3.5	-0.8
Information	350	350	390	0.0	-10.3
Financial Activities	1,850	1,830	1,860	1.1	-0.5
Professional & Business Services	1,280	1,350	1,530	-5.2	-16.3
Education & Health Services	3,910	4,030	4,010	-3.0	-2.5
Leisure & Hospitality	2,470	2,470	2,590	0.0	-4.6
Other Services	1,080	1,060	1,100	1.9	-1.8
Government Education	2,260	2,380	2,470	-5.0	-8.5
Government Administration	1,860	1,900	2,010	-2.1	-7.5
Government Tribes	870	870	820	0.0	6.1

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

seal of approval from the Idaho County Commission. A local group, Framing Our Community (FOC), is sponsoring the project. The development will be a three-phase operation. Phase one—a 5,000-square-foot building with 2,000-square-feet of office space—went out to bid in July. Construction on this facility and installation of the necessary utilities would begin in August; phase two and three would involve future additions to the building. FOC has been working on the incubator for three years, which is to be located in an open meadow area on State Highway 14 on the west end of Elk City.

- Plans are moving forward to build a tubing hill at Snowhaven ski area near Grangeville. The Snowhaven ski board expansion committee has raised money that will allow the committee to order the necessary equipment this summer and install it by fall for use this season. Tubes will be purchased locally through Idaho Sewing for Sports located, the largest snow tube manufacturer in the world, located in Mount Idaho.
- The Monastery of St. Gertrude broke ground in July for a nearly \$7 million conference and spirituality center. Building plans include a 120-seat conference room, 760-square feet of climate controlled museum and archive storage space, 22 double-occupancy private rooms, and a number of offices. Guests will have a tremendous view of the prairie. Contractors are Bouten Construction of Spokane and Arnzen Building Construction of Cottonwood.
- A local group of investors has purchased 275 acres of land just south of Grangeville and is working on plans for a new subdivision. The development acreage borders Grangeville Country Club to the east and the south; the owners plan to develop approximately 80 lots on the ridge to the east of the number five fairway and green in the first phase. "We want to invest in the future of the Grangeville area. We believe this is an attractive community for people who have a choice of where they want to live," said developer Scott Atkison. Lot sizes will vary from one-third of an acre to 4-acre lots with views of the Camas Prairie, Grangeville Golf Course, and the surrounding mountains. "We are working with the golf course on plans to extend various holes in the near future," said Atkison. "Eventually we would like to gift them enough land to possibly add another nine holes." Initial phases of development and construction are slated to begin later this year.

Latah County

- Alturas Technology Park in east Moscow is ready to move into the second and final phase of development. The new phase will begin with improvements to six additional lots for technology-related businesses. There are six lots in phase one. Current businesses include a lawyer's office, a technology-related accounting firm, and a business that tests water and soil. One lot in phase one has been purchased, another has a contingent offer on it, and a third building is vacant. While it has attracted businesses outside of the area, Alturas was designed for technology-related businesses that started up at the University of Idaho. Prior to the

creation of Alturas, new businesses would typically relocate to Coeur d'Alene or eastern Washington. A few businesses already have expressed interest in locating to the phase two lots.

Nez Perce County & Asotin Counties

- Tidyman's grocery store is closing its Lewiston and Moscow locations in July. The stores opened in 1968 and were among the first in the chain, but have been struggling financially for about three years, said Patty Kilcup, company spokeswoman in Spokane. The Lewiston stores' financial struggles predate the arrival of Safeway, which opened in the fall of 2002 just across the street, Kilcup said. Tidyman's employs 23 people in Lewiston and 56 in Moscow, she added.
- Members of the woodworkers union, representing about 280 hourly Potlatch Corp. employees in Lewiston, have passed a four-year contract. The contract package includes a wage increase plus a continuation of existing medical insurance coverage and vacation benefits, said Ron Teigen, business representative of Woodworkers District One in Lewiston. Potlatch is in a stronger financial position than when it negotiated in 2002 and 2003 with pulp and paperboard, and consumer products employees, who represent the majority of hourly workers in Lewiston. In 2002, Potlatch was heading toward its worst financial year in history. Talks extended for at least four months and employees worked for a time under the terms of an expired contract. The new contract involved a temporary pay cut followed by raises in later years and reductions in vacation for some employees. In contrast, the woodworkers' talks took place at a time when Potlatch is on the rebound. Potlatch posted a profit for the first time in four years at the end of 2003 and continued the trend in the first three months of 2004.

Doug Tweedy, Regional Labor Economist
 1158 Idaho Street, Lewiston, ID 83501
 (208) 799-5000 ext. 3511
 E-mail: dtweedy@cl.idaho.gov